

VZCZCXRO6393
PP RUEHPB
DE RUEHSV #0058 0232118
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 232118Z JAN 07
FM AMEMBASSY SUVA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3697
INFO RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1533
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY 1115
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 1307
RUEHNZ/AMCONSUL AUCKLAND PRIORITY 0327
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 0733
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHJJAA/JICPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SUVA 000058

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/24/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [XV](#) [TN](#)

SUBJECT: TONGA TIDBITS: TDS DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ; PLANS FOR
THE PIF

Classified By: Amb. Dinger. Sec. 1.4 (B,D)

TDS role in Tonga emergency not deterrent to Iraq deployment

[¶1.](#) (C) BGEN Uta'atu informed us Jan. 18 that the planned Tonga Defense Service (TDS) deployment to the Coalition of the Willing in Iraq (ref) is still in train. Per septels, the TDS has been heavily involved in security operations in the Tonga capital since a major riot last Nov. 16; however, Uta'atu assured us that his force can still deploy, even if a state of emergency continues at home. Uta'atu said his aim is to engage in mil/mil talks at CENTCOM in March, if possible, followed by deployment to MNFI in the northern summer. The Suva DATT is traveling to Tonga this week to continue planning.

TDS expanding

[¶2.](#) (C) Uta'atu confirmed that Tonga's Defense Board has agreed to enlarge the TDS significantly from its current size of around 450. He is preparing to add two companies (around 200 troops) in the next year.

Fiji and the PIF

[¶3.](#) (C) Secretary of the Tonga Ministry of Foreign Affairs Va'inga Tone informed us that Tonga will not support expulsion of Fiji from the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) over the December coup. He did not elaborate, but it is difficult in the Pacific to publicly bring a loss of face to a neighbor, even one that has misbehaved. Asked the status of the PIF's instruction for Fiji, Tonga, and PNG to undertake an evaluation of the RAMSI process in the Solomons, Tone said the Fiji coup and Tonga riot had put RAMSI on a back burner.

2007 Forum in Tonga

[¶4.](#) (U) Tone reported that the Tonga Cabinet has confirmed it wants the 2007 PIF Leaders Meeting and Post-Forum Dialogue to take place in Tonga. The death of King Tupou IV caused a shift of the 2006 Forum from Tonga to Fiji. Rough dates are late September or early October. The Leaders' Meeting portion is to take place in Vava'u, an hour's small-plane flight north from Nuku'alofa. Other events, including the Post-Forum Dialogue, are to be in Nuku'alofa.

DINGER